Hike!

Vol 3 No 8

June '01

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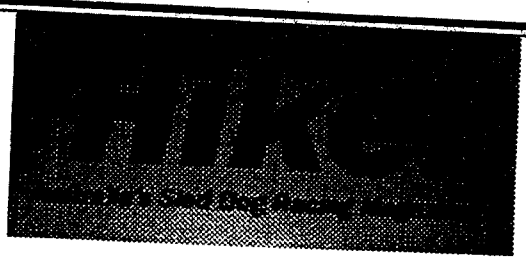

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Musher Profile – Scott Walker

Scott is an Australian-born Japanese resident and musher! Ed.

I was raised in Sydney.

I used to go for a week's holiday every year to Smiggings holes and I loved skiing only stopped 20mins for lunch as I only had a week per year.

I joined the volunteer ski patrol for 4 seasons in Perisher and skied in my free time.

In Nov 1990 I left to go to Europe where I taught skiing for 2 seasons and then worked as a lifeguard in Cornwall UK for 1 season.

I went home in 1993 in the middle of big recession and could not find any work at all. The last place I could get a working Holiday visa was Japan. I was 28 when I came. I taught English to start with in Sapporo and came out to Niseko, which is only 100km from Sapprro, every weekend in summer to go on the river and in winter to snowboard because it snows almost every day. Endless deep powder snow, perfect for snowboarding.

In autumn 1996 I decided to start my own rafting company in Niseko. I needed a winter business, to keep going through winter. The only alternatives at the time were ski and snowboard school but there were too many of them already, so I had to have something new. I had the idea of dog sledding. I didn't have any expertise in the area or any dogs, only a dream. I found a kind man to lend me his dogs. He ran dogs in races but his business was not going so well so could not run his dogs any more. I used his dogs for the first season. I found a place next to lift, a place that was not being used by any one. I paid the resort 20% of what I made in exchange for the place and had them grooming all that powder, to make a flat hard course. The course was only 500m long.

The experience included a lesson in sled handling, peddling. Then we pulled them on the sled behind a snowmobile. Finally we hooked 2-3 dogs up and of they went for a short but fun ride. All customers very happy.

I charged 1,800 yen which is about $18US. To supplement my income I took photos and sold them as well. I worked so hard and had no days off all winter. I ran a team of 4 dogs occasionally on a long course. I loved that the best, but found I was too tired to this very often.

The mass media come every year to film. I have been on TV countless amounts of times. I also offer snow rafting this is where I pull a small raft behind a snowmobile around the same course about 4 times. This is what kept the business and allowed me to show a small profit.

In the second season I bought my own dogs - about $1,000US per dog. I bought 9 Dogs. I also bought another snowmobile a 430HP Yamaha Enticer. A very very good snowmobile.

In the second season, due to the high cost of keeping dogs, I had to put the price up to 2,500 yen But this did not affect customer numbers. The second season was the best making a reasonable profit mainly due to snow rafting

In the 3rd seasonwe also made a reasonable profit.

Last season, the 4th season, was a complete disaster. The customer numbers in the resort was down by about 15% but SAS business was down by over 50%. Due in part to the recession, lack of employee enthusiasmn, the manager lacking any leadership skills and a very cold winter.

The resort this year has also decided to use my area themselves. As they say nothing is fair in love and war and business. I was paying them 20% on a business that was loosing money, they will operate snow rafting themselves.

So I have nowhere t
o operate my dog sled operation unless I find a place close to a lift with customers. There are only 2 places that are possibilities. Have not talked yet to the owners of the land but there is a good possibility that my dogs will live their days out as pets. Maybe that is the best thing. I do not know. I know it will be a sad day for Niseko to loose dog sledding.

Next year even if I find a place due to the deep powder if I cannot find a bulldozer I cannot make the snow hard enough to run the dogs so I will have a few barriers to come up against.

Postscript

Some good news, I think I have found a place to run my dogs next year. In a ski resort that will appreciate dog sledding.

The team will be reduced to 6 dogs from 11. The other dogs will be given away as pets. The reason is that it is much easier to manage, all round and not so expensive and I can exercise 6 dogs in the off season, 11 is too difficult.

Scott Walker and Husky Pup

Revised Southern Times

People who obtained the race results at the Southern Cross Pro Am will notice a change to the results posted in Hike! and in the Pointscore.

A timing error was noticed - which when rectified elevated Peter Komidar from 8th position to 5th place.

The results in Hike represent the true and correct version and have been used as the basis for pointscore calculations.

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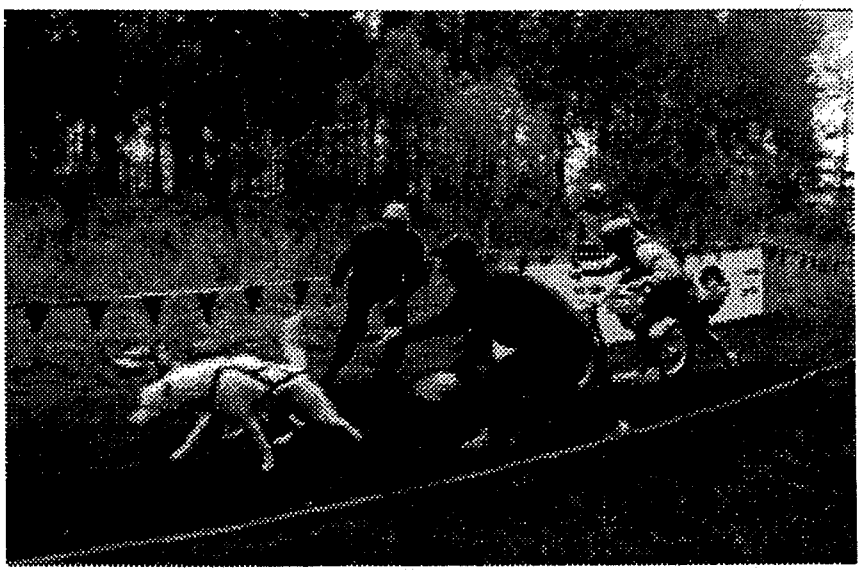
Race Report
Dash on the Downs

Wayne Baker

For their first race, the Race Organising Committee did a very good job. And from what we know, they put the whole race together in about five weeks!



Go! - Photo: Peter & Vanessa Neale

The temperature's were good. The highest temp was on the night run which started at 6 .30 pm. The temp was 15 degrees. The next morning we ran at 10 degrees and the last run was 8 degrees.

The track ranged from open dirt tracks to grass tracks which made it a challenging for everyone.

The Race Committee secured Hill's Science diet as their major sponsor and was well looked after by their sponsors.

Most people camped at the Crows Nest Caravan Park which was only 6km away from the race site. (In Qld state forests you can not camp like you can down south). The caravan park offers excellent facilities, boiling hot showers, washing machines and driers, and dogs are welcome (you have to keep them quiet of course) and best of all Gail, the owner of the park brings around freshly baked home-made muffins in the afternoon!

From what the committee has told me they are considering holding the Race next year possibly in July but that will be confirmed later this year. And the distances will be in line with other races at the same time of the year.

All in all it was a good weekend and we will be attending again next year.

Right - Wayne One Dogging It
Photo: Peter and Vanessa Neale

Two on the Trail - Photo: Peter & Vanessa Neale

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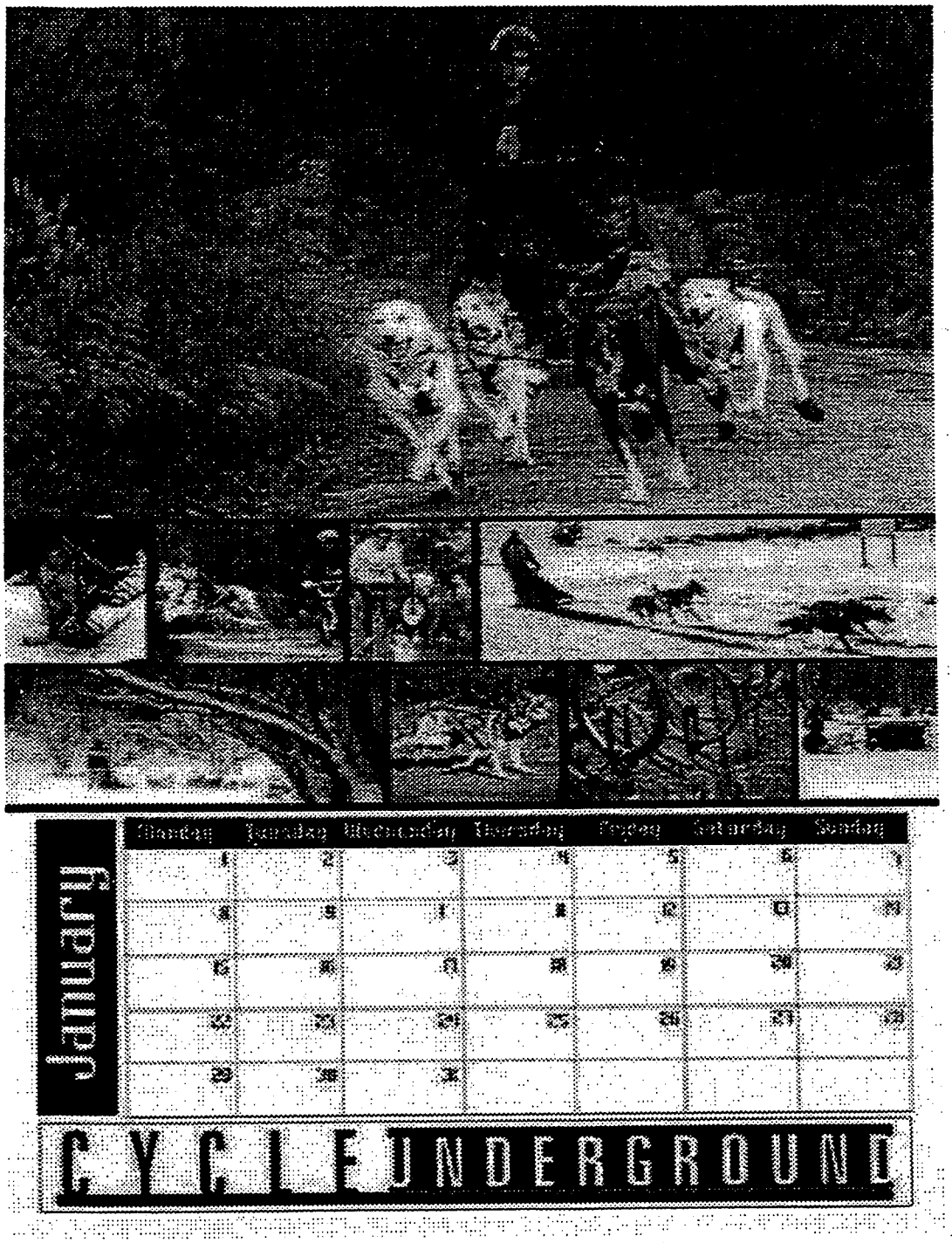

2001 Sled Dog Racing Calendar

This full colour A3 size 12 month calendar captures action shots from all Australian national circuit races. Order your calendar for Aud $20 + postage (available for sale to international as well as Australian readers)

To view the calendar in living colour – check it out at the *Hike!* web site. Follow the links at http://members.dynamite.com.au/komidar/Index.html

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RESULTS OF THE ASSA (formally AFSS) ELECTIONS

The inaugural ASSA - Australian Sleddog Sports Association (formally known as the AFSS) elections were held on Saturday the 26th of May 2001 at Gumbuya Park, Victoria (site of the Southern Cross Pro-Am). Twenty ASSA members attended to cast their vote in person and discuss the future of ASSA. Votes were also received via the post from members not able to attend. Rae Bank, president of the New Zealand Federation of Sleddog Sports (NZFSS) was in attendance on behalf of the International Federation of Sleddog Sports (IFSS) to observe and report back on this significant event.

The elected office bearers are -

President - Cliff French (NSW) aussiecliff@snowy.net.au
Vice President - Beth Bobroff (ACT) bb@flix.com.au
Secretary - Diane Baker (QLD) schusski@mail.ipswich.gil.com.au
Treasurer - Hayley Coutts (VIC) HAC@beaconhills.vic.edu.au

After the formalities were over, while enjoying a tasty spread of nibbles generously provided by Hayley Coutts, members stayed to informally discuss issues with the newly elected office bearers. The members present gave some of their concerns about mushing in general, issues relating to individual states and also proposed some courses of action for the new office bearers to pursue.

The new office bearers have been discussing these issues at length and are currently developing an action plan that will be put to members for comment at the first general meeting. The first general meeting for ASSA will be held at the Siberian Express Sleddog Sprint, Wingello State Forest NSW on the 23rd of June, at a time to be advised.

All formal correspondence to ASSA should be directed to **The Secretary, ASSA** - Lot 81, Farrell Road, Pine Mountain QLD 4306. If you have any questions or would like to discuss any ideas, please don't hesitate to contact any of the above.

Beth Bobroff
Vice President - ASSA - Australian Sleddog Sports Association Ph: (02) 6231 8460

Non-National Circuit Race Calendar

As well as the national circuit races which form part of the Hike/AFSS National Point Score, there are a number of state races. Some of these races are only open to certain breeds or to club members only – so talk to the nominated contact officer to make sure you can enter.

New South Wales
Contact: debonod@bridgesweb.com.au

Date	Name	Place
1-2 September	SHCNSW Pointscore	Belangalo State Forest

South Australia
Contact: Clint Graham (08) 8336 3076 or ryswyk@chariot.net.au

Date	Name	Place
3 June	Night Race	Mt Crawford
24 June	Twilight Race	Mt Crawford
1 July	State of Origin	Mt Gambier
22 July	SA Sled Dog Cup	Mt Crawford
5 August	Tribute to the Last Antarctic Husky	Mt Crawford

Queensland

Info will appear in the July edition of Hike!

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Training Information

Wayne Baker

Further to the training plans that I use, I have also found value using a training diary. As shown it is an excel spreadsheet that has a number of columns that I record information regarding our training runs. Distance; team size, temperature, and how the teams preformed. What I found was that it is also a great way to measure the distance I had completed during the season. It also enabled me to record the good & BAD runs, why & solutions. There could be other information you could include if you wanted. maybe time of run, trail location, conditions, and average speed. This diary is good for comparing each year so hopefully I don't repeat the same mistakes. When I do have a BAD run and feel a bit despondent, I look back at the many good runs and identify what went wrong. It is also great at the end of the season to see how well the team has improved over the runs.

Date	distance	Teams	Temp	Comments
10/5/01	10kms	9 dog team / big rig	15c	Good turns, team worked well. Bit humid. Cracked pad Nik. Rotated leaders.
8/5/01	6.4km	2 four dog teams	13c	16mins. Hard & fast run. Good run. Leader getting bored with track.

New WA Sled Dog Club

Announcing the formation of the THE ALASKAN MALAMUTE AND SIBERIAN HUSKY CLUB OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA (Inc).

Enquires to : Club Secretary Kim Hayes on 08 94952785 or mobile 0413 412412.

Kim's email address is : kimamarok@hotmail.com or kimamarok@yahoo.com

Kim has promised to do an article on the club for a future edition of Hike! so stay tuned.

Caught in the Net

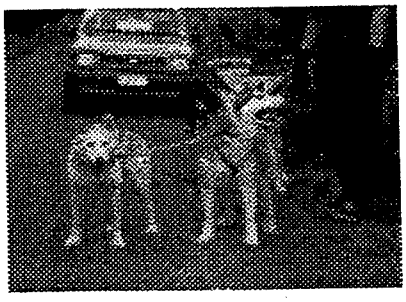
Four new additions to the Hike links page appear this month.

1. The Siberian Husky Club of Victoria's web site which includes a social sledding page. Check it out at http:/./www.geocities.com/vichusky
2. The Siberian Husky Club of NSW has a new link. This site also has a social sledding page. Surf to: http://devoted.to/siberians
3. The Siberian Husky and Malamute Club of SA also has a web page. Surf to: www.sibeandmal-club.com
4. And then there is Natalie Brown's web page. Very professionally done – congrats Natalie! Take a peek at: http://members.hn.ozemail.com.au/sibenah
5. For one hell of a web page visit the Hellhounds (Paul and Kim Snibon's web page). Its at: http://www.geocities.com/psnibso/

Remember, if you have a web page and want a link on the Hike Links Page – just send me your URL. So long as it has a page on mushing I will include it.

HIKE MIGRATES!

My ISP Dynamite.com.au is no more! Hopefully, by the time this magazine hits the streets, the *Hike!* web page has been migrated to http://austarmetro.com.au/~komidar. And our email has already changed to komidar@austarmetro.com.au



N & C Nicholson's 4 dog team from New Zealand, front dogs are Nikita (left) and Spike (right)
Photo: C&N Nicholson

GOODBYE WINTER

Peter Komidar

The Bureau of Meteorology's May-July outlook is for a 50% chance of above average rainfall but 65% chance of above average temperatures in the Canberra region. For Victoria and Southeast SA the chances of above average rainfall range from 40 – 25%. So its looking like wetter NSW and ACT races and drier Victorian and South Australian ones.

However, the news is not looking so good into the future. The CSIRO's Atmospheric Research's updated climate change models predict that annual average temperatures will be 0.4 Celsius to 2 Celsius greater than 1990 by 2030. These are average temperatures across the whole of the nation, but for certain regions particularly alpine regions, the differences are even more stark.

These warmer conditions are predicted to bring fewer cold days and more extremely hot days. Thus due to the increase in greenhouse gases there will be fewer days below zero. In fact, it is predicted that by 2030 most areas in Australia could see an end to freezing temperatures altogether. The CSIRO study showed an average of 44 frosty days per year in the Canberra region. A warming of just 0.5-1.5 degrees would mean see a drop of frosty days to between 30-40 and a rise of 6 degrees (the upper boundary of the predictions) could see as little as 6 frosty days remaining per year.

Meanwhile the number of days over 35 will dramatically increase.

Days over 35

City	2001	2030
Melbourne	8	9-12
Sydney	2	2-4
Brisbane	3	3-5
Canberra	4	6-10
Adelaide	10	11-16
Perth	15	16-22

The lower temperature estimates are based on an immediate dramatic change to green energy, decreased consumption of fossil fuels and decreasing deforestation. So given the position of the Australian and US governments on the greenhouse issue, the higher temperatures are far more likely!

At the same time, rainfall in the southeast of the country is expected to fall by as much as 10% by 2030 and snow cover will contract by 18-66%. It is predicted that a warming of only 1.5 degrees could mean a reduction of 60% of snowcover.

Statistics from the Bureau of Meteorology show a reduction in snow cover in May between 1970 and 1996. The stats also point to a reduction in the length of the deep winter season with the latter half of August tending towards September-like conditions.

In another study, botanist John Morgan found sub-alpine trees had climbed higher up the slopes over the last 25 years by as much as 40 metres – following a receding snow line. He pointed the finger squarely at global warming to explain the dramatic change. The forests are old and stable, changing little in the last 300-500 years. Such a marked change, he concludes, could only be attributed to climate change.

"We may be an early warning system for the rest of the world" said Morgan as Australia's low alpine regions are marginal at the best of times" he said.

What does that mean for the future of the sport in Australia? At the very least it points to a much smaller race season at worst well – judge for yourself .... But cheer up – our governments may yet get their act together to finally do something about greenhouse warming!

Ralph Koch at Underra 2000
Photo A&F Matthews

DOG SNACKS

Di Baker

Dog snacks can be given after training as a treat or during long distance training where you stop for a while without a meal being feed.

Hard-boiled eggs frozen make quick & easy dog snacks. You can leave the shell on but some of our dogs won't eat it.

Rice Balls – Boiled rice, eggs, sardines in oil. Mix all together and freeze in muffin pans. Once frozen pack into plastic bags & put back into freezer until required. Dogs will eat them frozen.

SHCNSW POINTSCORE RESULTS ON THE WEB

All the results from the recent Siberian Husky Club of NSW Pointscore race can be found on the web at:

http://www.geocities.com/heartland/plains/6515/race.html

Due to space limitations, *Hike!* is unable to publish the results in full - due to the number of non-national circuit races across Australia.

How to Administer a Tablet to a Cat

Unknown

1. Pick cat up and cradle it in the crook of your left arm as if holding a baby. Position right forefinger and thumb on either side of cat's mouth and gently apply pressure to cheeks while holding pill in right hand. As cat opens mouth pop pill into mouth. Allow cat to close mouth and swallow.
2. Retrieve pill from floor and cat from behind sofa. Cradle cat in left arm and repeat process.
3. Retrieve cat from bedroom, and throw soggy pill away.
4. Take new pill from foil wrap, cradle cat in left arm holding rear paws tightly with left hand. Force jaws open and push pill to back of mouth with right forefinger. Hold mouth shut for a count of ten.
5. Retrieve pill from goldfish bowl and cat from top of wardrobe. Call spouse from garden.
6. Kneel on floor with cat wedged firmly between knees, hold front and rear paws. Ignore low growls emitted by cat. Get spouse to hold head firmly with one hand while forcing wooden ruler into mouth. Drop pill down ruler and rub cat's throat vigorously.
7. Retrieve cat from curtain rail, get another pill from foil wrap. Make note to buy new ruler and repair curtains. Carefully sweep shattered figurines and vases from hearth and set to one side for gluing later.
8. Wrap cat in large towel and get spouse to lie on cat with head just visible from below armpit. Put pill in end of drinking straw, force mouth open with pencil and blow down drinking straw.9
9. Check label to make sure pill not harmful to humans, drink 1beer to take taste away.
10. Apply Band-Aid to spouse's forearm and remove blood from carpet with cold water and soap.
11. Retrieve cat from neighbor's shed. Get another pill. Open another beer. Place cat in cupboard and close door onto neck to leave head showing. Force mouth open with dessert spoon. Flick pill down throat with elastic band.
12. Fetch screwdriver from garage and put cupboard door back on hinges. Drink beer. Fetch bottle of scotch. Pour shot, drink. Apply cold compress to cheek and check records for date of last tetanus jab. Apply whiskey compress to cheek to disinfect. Toss back another shot. Throw T-shirt away and fetch new one from bedroom.
13. Ring fire brigade to retrieve the friggin' cat from tree across the road. Apologize to neighbor who crashed into fence while swerving to avoid cat. Take last pill from foil-wrap.
14. Tie the little bastard's front paws to rear paws with garden twine and bind tightly to leg of dining room table, find heavy duty pruning gloves from shed. Push pill into mouth followed by large piece of fillet steak. Be rough about it. Hold head vertically and pour 2 pints of water down throat to wash pill down.
15. Consume remainder of Scotch. Get spouse to drive you to the emergency room, sit quietly while doctor stitches fingers and forearm and removes pill remnants from right eye. Call furniture shop on way home to order new table.
16. Arrange for the RSPCA to collect mutant cat from hell and ring local pet shop to see if they have any hamsters.

HOW TO GIVE A DOG A PILL:

1. Wrap it in bacon.

Minerals and the racing dog

There are 19 or more minerals utilised by a dog's body and at least 13 of these are essential for its health. Minerals must be supplied in the diet and are generally found in animal and vegetable products. Even if these minerals are required in very small amounts (trace elements) they are still essential for health. What are the top 13 and what are these minerals responsible for?

Calcium is one of the most important minerals in the racing dog's diet. It is required for bone development and strength and also for the contraction of muscles. A deficiency of calcium can lead to bone weakness, joint problems and increased risk of breakdown in racing dogs. Young racing dogs that are being broken in and having their first training runs have an increased need for calcium. This is because the calcium is used to remodel and strengthen the immature bones. There is also an increase in the turnover of calcium in the bones when racing dogs are galloping at high speeds. Sufficient calcium in the diet will ensure that there is enough available for the repair and maintenance of bone structure and strength. The ideal level of dietary calcium for racing dogs is approximately 7-10 grams per day. This is much higher than that normally required for other breeds.

While the absolute levels of calcium are important, the balance or ratio of Calcium and **Phosphorus** is also vital. High meat diets (that is muscle without bone) are deficient in calcium and phosphorus. The optimum ratio of calcium to phosphorus should be 1.2-2 parts calcium to every 1 part Phosphorus. High protein diets also increase the demand for calcium. Vitamin D is essential for the absorption of calcium and for regulation of the Calcium Phosphorus ratio. Phosphorus is also important for the metabolism of energy and the production of protein.

Magnesium is also required for healthy bones and teeth. The heart muscles and nervous tissue require magnesium to function. A dietary deficiency is unlikely to occur.

Potassium is required for regulation of the body fluids and maintenance of the acid base balance within the body. A deficiency in this mineral can lead to muscular weakness and cramping.

Sodium and chloride are the major electrolytes of the body water and they are required to maintain the acid-base balance of the blood and regulate fluids within the body. Dogs do not sweat – they pant, so their demands for sodium are much lower than that of a horse which loses large amounts of sodium in its sweat.

Iron is one of the minerals essential for blood production and oxygen transport around the body. The majority of iron in a racing dog's body is incorporated into the structure of haemoglobin, the red pigment of the red blood cell that is responsible for carrying oxygen. Iron is also contained in enzymes used in the production of energy. Iron is stored in the liver, spleen, kidneys and bone marrow. Red blood cells live for about 120 days before being replaced by new cells; therefore the stores of iron are continually being used. Although the iron is recycled some is lost in the stools. Heavy hookworm burdnes can also remove blood from the circulation. The stress of training and regul racing can reduce the regenerative capacity of the bone marrow and fast exercise reduces the lifespan of red blood cells. All of these factors can lead to deletion in iron reserves. It takes several months to build u0p iron reserves, so it can take some time to correct a deficiency. Natural foods contain various sources of iron but some forms, such as yeast or blood meal, are only about 25% utilised in the racing dog. White meats contain much lower levels of iron than red meats.

Zinc is an essential component of many enzyme systems within the body. It is also essential for maintaining a healthy coat and skin. A diet that is high in calcium or vegetable protein cn dramatically increase the body's requirement for zinc. A deficiency in zinc results in poor growth and poor appetite, and may often be reflected in the skin and coat.

Iodine is an essential component of thyroid hormones, which regulate the body's metabolism. Enlargement of the thyroid gland (goitre), lethargy and hair problems are the principle signs of iodine deficiency. Meat contains low levels of iodine, but dry foods and vegetables usually provide sufficient levels to meet the elevated requirements of the racing dog.

Selenium is an anti-oxidant that works closely with Vitamin E. It helps to protect membranes of cells around the body from damage by free radicals that are produced during exercise and metabolism. Excess selenium can be very toxic, and although supplementation is sometimes used in severe cramping, it is important to consult with a veterinarian before using a Selenium supplement.

Manganese is required for the metabolism of carbohydrates and lipids. It is also involved in the formation of cartilage.

The body uses **cobalt** to make vitamin B12 and for this reason it plays an important role in blood production.

Copper must be available for iron to be incorporated into haemoglobin in red blood cells. Only trace levels are required. It is also responsible for the pigmentation of skin and hair.

Vetsearch International
PO Box 6025, Parramatta BC,
NSW, 2150

Making News

National Weight Pull competition is like a tractor pull for dogs

By BILL O'BRIEN

Travis City Record-Eagle

KALKASKA - After months of training and a pair of awards at a national strength competition in Wyoming last weekend, members of two Kalkaska families are ready to take the summer off.

Now they can get back to being the plain old family dog.

The dogs were among the top competitors at the annual International Weight Pull Association event, held this year in Cheyenne, where some of the country's most powerful canines pulled and tugged hundreds and even thousands of pounds in a strength test - sort of like a tractor pull for dogs.

"It's a fun sport - it's a really fun sport," said Diane Krupski of Kalkaska, whose family got into dog pulling about five years ago. "You meet people from all over who really love dogs and it's just a blast."

Pulling doesn't get the attention of dog shows or even dog racing, but the dogs' owners are just as dedicated and the sport has a wide following throughout Michigan.

The pulling season starts in September and runs through March, and local families attend two to three shows a month as their dogs compete in an eight-state region to gain points toward the national competition.

There are six different weight classes for the dogs, and the top three regional finishers go to the nationals to compete against some 40 to 60 other dogs from around the country and Canada.

The dogs are harnessed and pull sleds on wheels or across snow with escalating weights. They have to move them 16 feet in 60 seconds for a successful pull.

This year five dogs in the area - four from Kalkaska and one from Cadillac - qualified for the national competition.

Two came home with medals, including a gold medal in the 80-lb. Weight class for Barney, an 8-year-old malamute-retriever mix owned by Jim Fockler of Kalkaska.

Barney dragged more than 800 pounds for his winning pull, but has moved twice that much weight in other events even though he weighs just 67 pounds.

Barney's also the lead dog on Fockler's sled dog team and even pulls stumps out of the ground on his property.

"It's just amazing what these dogs can do," Fockler said. "Pound for pound they can out pull horses."

Crocus, a 165-pound Great Dane mix owned by Mark and Diane Krupski, took third place in the unlimited category. Shirley Webber of Kalkaska, one of the area's earliest dog-pulling enthusiasts, had two dogs qualify for the tournament.

Cadillac's Tony Radle had his white bulldog Tank in the nationals even though the dog has been competing for less than a year. He attended his first dog pull at last year's Winterfest in Kalkaska and was an instant fan.

"It looked like a lot of fun when I went – now I've done every (pull) they've had," he said. "It's a good excuse to spend all weekend with your dog."

During the season the dogs train at least twice a week, dragging things like sleds and wood pallets up to four miles a session. But with the arrival of the spring and hotter weather, the training cuts off and the dogs spend the summer months much like the rest of the family pets.

The dogs have more than strength in common. They're all friendly, well-mannered dogs without a hint of aggressiveness toward people – despite their powerful features.

They're also "rescue" dogs - everyday mixes which would've likely been abandoned if they hadn't been taken in by their owners.

"Up here in northern Michigan, we pull with what we have," Webber said.

NSW WEIGHTPULL

The samoyed club of NSW with the aid of the Alaskan Malamute club of NSW will be holding a weight pull training day at Londonderry on the 17th June.

Time: 8.30am

Location: 62 Torrkington Rd Londonderry

Aims: To introduce new and old to the world of weight pulling. There will be training tips, training pulls and the cart and track available for the more experienced or eager to practice.

Literature: literature and contact details will be available

Cost: Nil, although there will be a sausage sizzle and chocolate drive to help raise funds for the Samoyed club to hold future events. Support would be greatly appreciated.

Bring: Yourself, your dogs (any breed), water and bowl, something to keep them tied up to, treats Dogs must be kept on lead at all times.

For more details contact:

Rosie Santangelo

612 9845 7367 (phone)

612 9891 5317 (fax)

rosies@icpmr.wsahs.nsw.gov.au

Limited Alaskan puppies for sale.

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Father - Excel (Bred by Martin Buser). Iditarod finisher.

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Phone: 02 4576 3372
Mobile: 0408 763372

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Passing

Michaela Spackova Paul

I have been passed by many people in my few years of racing and I have been fortunate to pass some teams myself. But there is a certain kind of magic at the start line when no body realises it is happening. The musher who is about to take off has no understanding that is just about to happen but it does happen - to him to me and to you. I don't know many people who have not had a similar experience.

When the count down starts and approaches "go!" there is this very quiet moment (just a moment), the dogs that were constantly jerking on the line stay still for a split second and there it goes. The common sense literally walks out of the musher.

And it walks, the common sense that is, to wait on us at the finish line, so it can jump back in to our body again.

Let me just explain what I mean by this. At one race I had a man on my tail who was just about to pass my two dog team. He calls trail, I hit the brakes and the girls slow down to stop. He is passes cleanly, still yelling to himself "trail!" To this day I still don't understand why he kept yelling, he passed me cleanly with his scooter but his dogs decided that the Alaskan smelled really good and started to sniff her rear. With that he tells me to stop crossing the line. I figured that he must never have seen an angry woman before, and I vowed to get revenge. Little did I understand what was in store.

The Sibe dug in quite hard when she realised that we had been passed by another team. To my surprise we caught the team in the last ½ km and we tried to pass in a nice and orderly fashion. But at every time I called the girls over left or over right, the guy's team would listen to my command and cross over the track, whichprovoked immense frustration for the Sibe. So just about 30 meters from the finish line, I saw an opportunity and yelled "get out of here girls", and as the noses on my team hit the rear end of this guy's dogs for whatever reason my girls suddenly went each side of his team, and we ended running together like a four dog fan hitch. Which did not bother me, because frankly he deserved it. But it did upset him a bit. It is not the image you want to be known by, when you are just about to win the block of flats up in Toorak.

And so the real victory was mine. I got my revenge. Until that is about two weeks latter at another race when there is another guy who is just about to pass me, and once again his team is only interested in my girls. Sniffing their bums. But this time I was a nice lady and very politely asked "are you alright?" And he replied yes thank you.

Hmm, somehow I managed to get his dogs away from mine, without getting off the scooter and he took off. But his puppy's wanted only to sniff my girls bums, just like they had some sniffing disorder. And so they made a u-turn and came back to sniff again. How this guy stayed on his scooter I'll never know.

Well there they were face to face sniffing. Luckily none of the dogs where aggressive and there was no problem. But I could not resist asking again are you all right. The look on his face was all I needed, but he was a nice man and said for the second time "yes I am". He was in view for a good 50 meters and then he disappeared.

But I do believe what goes around comes around and I will never forgot that year when we run into that Maverick dog.

Craig Turner at the Southern Cross Start line Photo: Sharon Komidar

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Southern Cross Fastest Teams

Fastest Team at the Southern Cross Pro Am was driven by David Hodgson in the 2 Dog Class who clocked up an unbelievable 34.8 km/h over the 4.8 km trail on the second heat. If you've raced on the twisting trails at Southern Cross – you'll know what a feat that average speed is!

Fastest 4 Dog team was Mitch Blockley who on day two covered the 6.8 km trail in 29.7 km/h.

Fastest 1 Dog team was Mark Mulcahy clocking an average speed of 28.6 km over the 3 km trail.

Pets are allergic to the hand that feeds them

Susan Bisset and Charlotte Edwardes
The Telegraph (UK)

VETERINARY scientists have come up with a surprising explanation for an increasing incidence of illnesses among pets: many animals are allergic to their owners.

According to new research, as many as 750,000 domestic cats and dogs suffer from the condition - caused either by a direct physical aversion to human skin or by a reaction to the excreta of dust mites that feed on dead human skin cells.

Pets which are allergic to humans suffer from sneezing fits or skin irritation which can lead to them scratching themselves until they bleed. The findings follow research at the Hospital for Small Animals at the Royal School of Veterinary Studies in Edinburgh, which carries out allergy tests on more than 160 cats and dogs a year. Staff estimate that up to five per cent of pets are allergic to humans.

Dr Peter Hill, a veterinary dermatologist working with the team, said: "We have discovered that a small number of dogs and cats are allergic to human skin scale and are therefore directly allergic to their owners. The majority, however, are allergic to the dust mites." Neil Fraser, the managing director of Scottish Pet Insurance, confirmed that the link between humans, dust mites and pet allergies was now accepted. He said: "Treatment for allergies can cost up to £2,500 per animal."

Dr Steve Shaw, an allergy specialist at the Animal Health Trust, said that the conditions were often very distressing. "Symptoms include itchiness on the face, feet and hairless areas for the dog. Cats will lick and chew their fur out. The usual treatment involves a variety of drugs including essential fatty acids, antihistamines and steroids to reduce inflammation. Desensitisation injections can be used to modify reaction to the causes of the disease."

Beverly Cuddy, the editor of Dogs Today, said that animal allergies were one of the biggest costs to animal insurance companies. She said: "Skin problems in dogs are increasing and are often very difficult to diagnose." One owner, Valerie Harmsworth, was told that Lewis, her black labrador, was allergic to dust mites after he developed a serious skin condition. She said: " I was heartbroken. He would scratch and bite himself until he bled. I was sleeping on the sitting room floor so that I could respond to him immediately and try to stop him scratching."

Mrs Harmsworth said: "The vets wanted to put him down and he looked so terrible that when I walked him in the street I would get abuse. I knew that indirectly we were causing it and my vet told me that I should put him out of the house, in a kennel in the garden, but Lewis was really attached to me."

In an attempt to rid her home at Kempshot, near Basingstoke, Hampshire, of the mites, she ripped up the carpets, changed Lewis's bedding and bought a new vacuum cleaner. Mrs Harmsworth never considered getting rid of the dog and eventually discovered that aloe vera helped to ease the symptoms of his allergy.

Pet allergies are becoming so common that the British Allergy Association, inundated with calls from distraught pet owners, is setting up a separate Pet Allergy Association. Muriel Simmons, the BAA chief executive, said: "We were getting so many calls that it got to the point where I had to say I can't keep giving advice on pets - I'm employed to give advice on humans."

Northern Exposure Gig Racing Club Inc 7th Annual Northern Exposure Classic 29th, 30th June - 1st July 2001

Donald Maillet
NEGRC Race Committee

We would like to welcome you to the 7th Annual Northern Exposure Classic, held at Noosa North Shore Retreat, Noosa Queensland. We are proud to announce Pedigree, Frontline and Noosa North Shore Retreat as our major sponsors for this years event.

This year the NEGRC Inc would like to welcome Micheal Gascoigne, from Park Ridge QLD as our Race Marshall. As a seven time Iditarod Trail Race Vet, Micheal will be sharing a wealth of knowledge and stories (which will include this years Iditarod) with us. He will hold a presentation on Saturday afternoon will a Q&A following.

Once again this year we will have our ever popular race t shirts for sale on Saturday, get in early as they go fast and are limited. The raffle and auction will be held after the musher banquet on Saturday night.

"Come to the Classic, an experience to remember, one you'll never forget"

All enquiries Donald Maillet 07 3822 6427 or email d.maillet@mailbox.uq.edu.au

Entry forms available from past issues of Hike! and VSDRA magazines or by contacting the above number.

Right: New Australian Antarctic Sled Dog Stamps
Photo: Natalie Brown

So You Wanna Be A Musher – Part IV
The Basic Commands
Peter Komidar

Even before you necessarily first set foot on a scooter, there are some fundamental commands you can teach your dog(s) - commands vital to successful mushing.

Gee and Haw First of all, you need to teach your dog to turn on command. This is easier to do than it sounds. Whenever you walk your dogs and need to take a turn, call out the command to your dog(s) and praise them when the turn is executed (even if at first you have to physically shepherd them around the corner). Any term will do - but the usual commands are 'Gee' or 'Right' for a right hand turn and 'Haw' or 'Left' for left.

If 'Gee' and 'Haw' sound a little confusing, remember the old saying "Gee your right!" and you'll never forget which is which.

On By What happens if you come to an intersection and you want to go straight ahead - rather than left or right? Thats when you use the term 'On By'. Its can also be used when the dog is distracted by something on the side of the trail or when passing other teams.

Hike This term is used at the start of a run to encourage the dogs to run fast. It can also be used during a run to build up speed. An alternative command is 'Go'..

Hold This command tells the dog to stand in position and not move allowing the musher to put on or remove a harness, lines etc but also to keep the dogs stationary in the event of a bad tangle on the trail – and most importantly if you've let go of the scooter/rig/sled. You can teach this one after each walk - when taking off the collar/lead.

Whoa As you'd expect this command informs the dog to slow down. Once again useful for instance if the trail becomes tricky or if you get a tangle. (Especially the latter as applying the brakes in many instances could possibly injure dog in a bad tangle).

Physical Training

You've got your equipment - you've started teaching your dog the required commands - you are now ready to mush! But wait, there is one more basic requirement to successful mushing - exercise.

Mushing is an energetic sport - for both the dog and the musher! And as with every sport you need to be fit. Of course, regular mushing is a great way to make and keep your dog fit. But obviously your dog(s) will be under a fair bit of strain, at least initially, if they have a lazy time all week and then are expected to sprint along for kilometres pulling human cargo. This is compounded if the dog is overweight.

If you intend to run your dogs, even if only recreationally, you really should consider some extracurricular exercise activities. Nothing too onerous - a few extra walks each week will be sufficient to ensure that both you and your dog(s) are fit enough to engage in the sport without causing any physical damage. It is also equally important that you ensure your dog is not too overweight. As a rule of thumb, if you can feel the dog's backbone and ribs with the open palm of your hand as you slide it along the dog's body, your dog is in good shape for mushing.

If you intend to go the next step and participate in sled dog races, then you would be advised to step up your exercise regime further. But that's a topic for next month's article.

Wild Dog Update

Michael Herbst

The 6 dog class is underway with the new trophies being made as you read this. We have gone out and found a lovely 400 year old gum tree and cut it down, only kidding. All we need now is for the mushers to support this class and we have a race.

The distance will be 7km and it will run with the 4 dog class for this year.

The Kid'n'mutt class this year will be running a 1.8km (Approx) track, we have decided that it is time to start to teach our juniors some of the skills of racing. The Mini Mutt class will still be run on a straight track with the aid of an adult.

The Banquet is shaping up to be a highlight of the weekend with the Caterers promising us a big surprise this year, as we all know the food is great, so what can they be cooking up. I suppose we all will have to wait and find out. (I have heard a whisper that tights and push up bras are in this year!!!!!)

Some Hike Feedback

Recently some positive feedback on Hike! appeared on the email list Sleddog-L (see the Hike homepage for a link to this list).

Here's what they said:

"I subscribe to "Hike! Australia's Sled Dog Racing Magazine". They do lots of scooter races and scootering is my thing. The articles are good and the photos are outstanding".
Daphne Lewis

"Yes, "Hike" is an excellent publication. I think it certainly is the Australian version of Team & Trail. Many good articles".
Diana

Right: Andrew Colvin at the 2000 Sydney Shield
Photo: A&F Matthews

Hike!/ASSA National Sprint Pointscore

After 2 races the pointscore is as follows:

4 Dog Class

Mitch Blockely	1070
Alex Theuma	1063.683
Paul Snibson	1021.192
Owen Robertson	1019.527
Di Baker	1000
Annie Jackson	993.544
Jessica Baker	992.1789
Terry Mace	984.4796
Kim Snibson	965.6752
Beth Bobroff	963.8657
Mark George	961.0308
Lawrie Coutts	958.2471
Jozsef Toth	956.1732
Mark Waldock	921.1571
John Hodgson	920.5664
Jason Strenger	917.8818
Craig Turner	917.7167
Sussan Hodgkinson	911.8172
Rick van Driel	880.6085
John Rozman	861.2552
Merv Turner	852.3961
Karen McCarthy	811.1442
Dugal Baird	767.6076
Michael Sheedy	757.0129
Jason Walkom	753.6975
Mario Suban	742.7843
Russell Andrews	653.8221
Daniel Odgers	588.688

2 Dog

David Hodgson	1030
David Hutchinson	1023.878
Raelene Kwong	1021.985
Adam Johnson	1000
David Pettifer	998.0587
Peter Komidar	993.977
Darren Higgins	990.2993
Travis Smith	988.3307
Darren Scragg	987.2793
Chris Neave	942.8809
Peter McCann	899.0442
Lyndon Reid	895.5744
Tony Field	894.0103
Carl Persson	892.5896
Peter Neale	882.2331
Roseanne Shailer	878.5988
Danny Bruce	846.8372
Rob Clive	829.1965
Daniel Odgers	825.3515
Jacqui McNicol	795.4498
Gary Clarkson	787.849
Merv Turner	783.3563
Glenn Hollow	781.3831
Anthony Cook	770.6632
Amanda Morris	763.7216
Owen Piper	744.9627
Vannessa Neale	634.7188
Anitra Dunshea	594.47

1 Dog

Mark Mulcahy	1070
Darren Kent	1064.605
Michael Herbst	1056.363
Ross Kinane	1045.082
Trevor Taylor	1040.488
Carl Persson	1000
Brownie	968.8513
Dimitris Limnatitis	964.2786
Wanye Baker	961.3072
Steven Blanch	941.5756
Josh Martin	938.8698
Merv Turner	932.1783
Adrian Fasham	923.1067
Lyndon Reid	913.1589
Roseanne Shailer	901.738
Steven Bradbury	887.4958
Darren Higgins	881.544
Simon Creely	873.7249
Peter McCann	864.4095
Brendan Heinicke	836.3674
George Podger	835.0694
Jacqui McNicol	781.0469
Melissa Turner	772.396
Donald maillet	768.5678
David Layton	744.6515
Eric Evans	711.1946
Darren Browne	701.8114
Daniel Odgers	693.6759
Liz van Driel	689.9469
Carolyn Browne	683.5387
Gabi Piper	681.6702
Sharon Komidar	670.58
Andrew Myers	661.7828
Andrew Matthews	650.5569
Fiona Matthews	635.507
Natalie Higgins	589.0112
Joel Hines	579.3535
Dean Craker	570.3401
Sarah Pierce-Adams	536.3623
David Sanders	495.5321

What Huskies do for training in the country

Dash on the Downs – Race Results

Four Dog – 4.6 km per heat

Name	Heat 1	Heat 2	Heat 3	Total Time
Di Baker	00:15:18.68	00:14:27.56	00:13:42.00	00:43:28.24
Jessica Baker	00:15:48.68	00:14:45.64	00:13:14.48	00:43:48.80
Russell Andrews	00:27:44.69	00:20:01.76	00:18:42.77	01:06:29.22

Two Dog – 3.6 km per heat

Name	Heat 1	Heat 2	Heat 3	Total Time
Adam Johnson	00:09:05.75	00:08:53.14	00:08:38.64	00:26:37.53
Carl Persson	00:09:47.29	00:10:08.26	00:09:54.22	00:29:49.77
Peter Neale	00:10:29.60	00:10:16.80	00:09:24.38	00:30:10.78
Rob Clive	00:11:12.60	00:11:07.21	00:09:46.79	00:32:06.60
Amanda Morris	00:12:28.22	00:10:39.40	00:11:44.15	00:34:51.77
Vannessa Neale	00:19:02.46	00:11:39.98	00:11:14.47	00:41:56.91

One Dog – 2.3 km per heat

Name	Heat 1	Heat 2	Heat 3	Total Time
Carl Persson	00:06:27.48	00:05:46.80	00:05:44.72	00:17:59.00
Brownie	00:06:24.20	00:06:15.71	00:05:53.78	00:18:33.69
Wayne Baker	00:06:45.35	00:05:58.00	00:05:59.08	00:18:42.43
Donald Maillet	00:09:33.36	00:06:55.57	00:06:54.98	00:23:23.91
David Layton	00:07:30.49	00:09:12.23	00:07:26.28	00:24:09.00
Darren Browne	00:08:54.91	00:06:50.93	00:09:51.61	00:25:37.45
Carolyn Browne	00:10:12.97	00:07:42.84	00:08:22.74	00:26:18.55
Sarah Pierce-Adams	00:11:02.06	00:11:00.10	00:11:29.54	00:33:31.70

Fastest Team – Adam Johnson – 2 Dog – Heat 3 – 24.99 km/h (average speed).

Fastest 4 Dog – Jessica Baker – 20.84 km/h

Fastest 1 Dog – Carl Persson – 24.02 km/h

Southern Cross 2001 Results 4 Dog Pro Class

Name	Bib	Heat 1 Time	Heat 1 Position	Heat 2 Time	Heat 2 Position	Overall Time	Final Position
Mitch Blockley	95	0:13:49.04	1	0:13:45.72	1	0:27:34.76	1
Alex Theuma	97	0:13:55.76	2	0:13:49.52	2	0:27:45.28	2
Paul Snibson	94	0:14:51.19	5	0:14:08.48	4	0:28:59.67	3
Owen Robertson	82	0:14:29.35	3	0:14:33.37	5	0:29:02.72	4
Annie Jackson	88	0:14:43.85	4	0:15:07.90	7	0:29:51.75	5
Terry Mace	96	0:15:11.46	6	0:14:58.05	6	0:30:09.51	6
Kim Snibson	98	0:16:43.21	16	0:14:04.29	3	0:30:47.50	7
Beth Bobroff	84	0:15:23.16	8	0:15:28.08	9	0:30:51.24	8
Mark George	81	0:15:42.45	10	0:15:14.68	8	0:30:57.13	9
Lawrie Coutts	85	0:15:20.51	7	0:15:42.44	11	0:31:02.95	10
Jozsef Toth	83	0:15:35.29	9	0:15:32.02	10	0:31:07.31	11
Mark Waldock	92	0:15:53.13	12	0:16:31.00	15	0:32:24.13	12
John Hodgson	91	0:16:16.76	13	0:16:08.72	14	0:32:25.48	13
Jason Strenger	89	0:16:35.87	15	0:15:55.77	12	0:32:31.64	14
Craig Turner	99	0:16:26.70	14	0:16:05.32	13	0:32:32.02	15
Sussan Hodgkinson	87	0:15:45.12	11	0:17:00.58	17	0:32:45.70	16
Rick Van Driel	86	0:16:59.19	17	0:17:02.19	18	0:34:01.38	17
Karen McCarthy	100	0:19:56.92	19	0:17:15.79	19	0:37:12.71	18
Michael Sheedy	93	0:21:55.49	20	0:18:13.14	20	0:40:08.63	19
Jason Walkom	101	0:19:54.11	18	0:20:26.20	21	0:40:20.31	20
Daniel Odgers	90	0:36:17.08	21	0:16:53.20	16	0:53:10.28	21

Southern Cross 2001 - 4 Dog Sports Class

Name	Bib	Heat 1 Time	Heat 1 Position	Heat 2 Time	Heat 2 Position	Overall Time	Final Position
John Rozman	115	0:18:12.49	2	0:16:38.82	1	0:34:51.31	1
Merv Turner	113	0:17:34.84	1	0:17:40.15	2	0:35:14.99	2
Dugal Baird	114	0:19:14.97	3	0:20:17.08	3	0:39:32.05	3
Mario Suban	112	0:19:57.29	4	0:21:02.28	4	0:40:59.57	4

Southern Cross 2001 Results 2 Dog Pro Class

Name	Bib	Heat 1 Time	Heat 1 Position	Heat 2 Time	Heat 2 Position	Overall Time	Final Position
David Hodgson	52	0:09:11.00	7	0:08:16.12	1	0:17:27.12	1
David Hutchinson	48	0:08:53.03	2	0:08:40.54	2	0:17:33.57	2
Raelene Kwong	47	0:08:36.23	1	0:08:59.35	4	0:17:35.58	3
David Pettifer	43	0:09:07.27	4	0:08:54.40	3	0:18:01.67	4
Peter Komidar	50	0:09:02.71	3	0:09:03.54	9	0:18:06.25	5
Darren Higgins	49	0:09:08.36	5	0:09:02.05	5	0:18:10.41	6
Travis Smith	46	0:09:09.59	6	0:09:03.06	6	0:18:12.65	7
Chris Neave	45	0:09:31.13	9	0:09:35.92	7	0:19:07.05	8
Tony Field	42	0:10:00.33	10	0:10:11.60	8	0:20:11.93	9
Mark Mulcahy	51	0:09:22.24	8	12:45:19.52	999	12:54:41.76	999

Southern Cross 2001 - 2 Dog Sports Class

Name	Bib	Heat 1 Time	Heat 1 Position	Heat 2 Time	Heat 2 Position	Overall Time	Final Position
Darren Scragg	70	0:09:03.64	1	0:09:10.21	1	0:18:13.85	1
Peter McCann	71	0:10:11.03	3	0:09:53.88	2	0:20:04.91	2
Lyndon Reid	64	0:09:47.07	2	0:10:22.67	4	0:20:09.74	3
Roseanne Sharlee	62	0:10:30.69	5	0:10:03.25	3	0:20:33.94	4
Danny Bruce	63	0:10:32.79	6	0:10:49.22	5	0:21:21.92	5
Daniel Odgers	61	0:10:35.66	7	0:11:20.69	6	0:21:56.55	6
Jacqui McNicol	72	0:11:26.81	11	0:11:21.17	7	0:22:47.98	7
Gary Clarkson	68	0:10:21.38	4	0:12:40.32	11	0:23:01.70	8
Merv Turner	66	0:11:17.74	10	0:11:52.20	8	0:23:09.94	9
Glenn Hollow	73	0:11:14.69	9	0:11:58.99	9	0:23:13.59	10
Anthony Cook	65	0:11:07.23	8	0:12:26.53	10	0:23:33.76	11
Owen Piper	67	0:11:32.11	12	0:12:52.47	12	0:24:24.58	12
Anitra Dunshea	69	0:14:52.50	13	0:16:02.55	13	0:30:55.05	13

Southern Cross 2001 Results 1 Dog Pro Class

Name	Bib	Heat 1 Time	Heat 1 Position	Heat 2 Time	Heat 2 Position	Overall Time	Final Position
Mark Mulcahy	3	0:06:35.16	3	0:06:17.30	1	0:12:52.46	1
Darren Kent	10	0:06:32.73	2	0:06:23.92	2	0:12:56.65	2
Michael Herbst	5	0:06:30.48	1	0:06:32.66	5	0:13:03.14	3
Ross Kinnane	4	0:06:42.28	4	0:06:29.92	3	0:13:12.20	4
Trevor Taylor	7	0:06:43.55	5	0:06:32.40	4	0:13:15.95	5
Dimitris Limnatitis	12	0:07:42.77	10	0:06:41.01	7	0:14:23.78	6
Steven Blanch	9	0:07:30.03	6	0:07:16.25	10	0:14:46.28	7
Josh Martin	6	0:07:38.40	9	0:07:10.64	9	0:14:49.04	8
Merv Turner	8	0:07:37.61	8	0:07:18.33	11	0:14:55.94	9
Darren Higgins	2	0:09:14.04	13	0:06:37.80	6	0:15:51.84	10
Simon Creely	11	0:08:13.29	11	0:07:47.81	13	0:16:01.10	11
Peter McCann	13	0:08:53.49	12	0:07:18.88	12	0:16:12.37	12
Brendan Heinicke	1	0:09:49.59	14	0:06:58.36	8	0:16:47.95	13

Southern Cross 2001 - 1 Dog Sports Class

Name	Bib	Heat 1 Time	Heat 1 Position	Heat 2 Time	Heat 2 Position	Overall Time	Final Position
Adrian Fasham	23	0:07:39.82	1	0:07:25.64	2	0:15:05.46	1
Lyndon Reid	26	0:07:51.16	4	0:07:24.99	1	0:15:16.15	2
Roseanne Shailer	36	0:07:41.10	2	0:07:47.63	4	0:15:28.73	3
Steven Bradbury	32	0:07:59.64	5	0:07:45.27	3	0:15:44.91	3
George Podger	21	0:08:38.56	6	0:08:11.10	5	0:16:49.66	5
Jacqui McNicol	35	0:09:08.86	8	0:08:57.51	6	0:18:06.37	6
Melissa Turner	31	0:08:53.47	7	0:09:26.28	8	0:18:19.75	7
Eric Evans	24	0:09:59.64	11	0:10:05.08	9	0:20:04.72	8
Daniel Odgers	22	0:09:40.55	9	0:10:58.01	16	0:20:38.56	9
Liz Van Driel	30	0:10:35.25	12	0:10:10.76	10	0:20:46.01	10
Gabi Piper	34	0:09:52.73	10	0:11:10.14	18	0:21:02.87	11
Sharon Komidar	27	0:11:10.02	14	0:10:16.17	12	0:21:26.19	12
Andrew Myers	33	0:10:38.90	13	0:11:06.41	17	0:21:45.31	13
Andrew Matthews	25	0:11:47.39	15	0:10:23.16	13	0:22:10.55	14
Fiona Matthews	40	0:12:06.68	15	0:10:39.28	14	0:22:45.96	15
atalie Higgins	38	0:14:35.47	17	0:10:12.86	11	0:24:48.33	16
Joel Hines	28	0:16:05.62	19	0:09:10.93	7	0:25:16.55	17
Dean Craker	37	0:15:03.75	18	0:10:40.12	15	0:25:43.87	18
David Sanders	29	0:14:23.37	16	0:15:51.91	19	0:30:15.28	19
Steven Blanch	39	0:07:43.65	3	1:07:32.66	999	1:15:16.31	999

2001 Race Calendar

Sprint Races

Race	Distances	Date	Contact
Undera Sled Dog Dash (Victoria)	1 Dog Class 3 heats of 2km 2 Dog Class, 3 heats 4.5km 3&4 Dog Class 2 heats 7km + night heat 4.5km, Novice 2 heats of 2 km -no night heat	9-11 June	Helen & David Pettifer pettifer@bigpond.com
Sydney Sled Dog Sprint (New South Wales)	1 Dog Class 2 heats of 3.8km 2 Dog Class 2 heats of 5.5km 3 Dog Class 2 heats of 9.6 km 4 Dog Class 2 heats of 10.7km 6 Dog Class 2 heats of 12.6km	23-24 June	Craig Turner ionamal@shoal.net.au (02) 4285 2457
Northern Exposure Classic (Queensland)	1 Dog Class 3 heats of 2.5 km 2 Dog Class 3 heats of 4 km 4 Dog Class 3 heats of 6 km	29/6 - 1/7	Donald Maillet d.maillet@mailbox.uq.edu.au (07) 3822 6427
Gold Seekers Race (Victoria)	1 Dog Class 2 heats of 3 km 2 Dog Class 2 heats of 6.5 km 4 Dog Class 2 heats of 9.0 km 6 Dog Class 2 heats of 12.7 km	7-8 July	Jacqui McNicol mcnicol@ruralnet.net.au
Wild Dog Derby (South Australia)	1 Dog Class 2 heats of 3.6 km 2 Dog Class 2 heats of 5.9 km 4 Dog Class 2 heats of 7.6 km	14-15 July	Michael Herbst arcticstarr@chariot.net.au
Sydney Sled Dog Shield (New South Wales)	1 Dog Class 2 heats of 3.6 km 2 Dog Class 2 heats of 4.6 km 3 & 4 Dog Class 2 heats of 8.2 km	28-29 July	Ivan Douglas skylaska@zip.com.au (02) 9824 7759
The Burn (Victoria)	1&2 Dog Class 2 heats of 7.5km 3, 4 & 6 Dog Class 2 heats of 15km Junior Class 2 heats of 3.8km	4-5 August	Lisa Hodgson lihuk@netspace.net.au (03) 5281 5283
A5000 Sled Dog Derby (Victoria) TO BE CONFIRMED	TBA	11-12 August	Robert Stevens sleddogs@ssc.net.au (03) 5428 3285
Canberra Classic (ACT)	1 Dog Class 2 heats of 3.6 km 2 & 3 Dog Class 2 heats of 7.2 km 4 Dog Class 2 heats of 9.0 km	18-19 August	Len Tomlinson Kivawolf@bigpond.com (02) 6258 8063

Distance Races

Race	Distance	Date	Contact
SX Distance Race (New South Wales)	6 Dog Class (min 4 dogs) Distance 1 heat of 18.5km	23-24 June	Craig & Melissa Turner ionamal@shoal.net.au (02) 4285 2457
Southern Highlands Freight Run (New South Wales)	1 Dog Class 2 heats of 7.8 km 2 Dog Class 2 heats of 14.9 km 4 Dog Class 2 heats of 20.8 km 6 Dog Class 2 heats of 20.8 km Freight Class 2 heats of 7 km (6, 4 & 2 dog classes)	7-8 July	Becky Walters bknown@ozemail.com.au 02-9629-3149
B60 (New South Wales)	6 Dog Class 2 stages of 30km (min 4 dogs)	21-22 July	Stephen Carrick crack@ozemail.com.au
Kooyoora Challenge (Victoria)	2 heats of 25 km 6, 8, Open class (min 4 dogs)	4-5 August	Barry Burden frostbyt@acepia.net.au
CSDC Summit Challenge (ACT)	2 stages of 20 km (min 4 dogs)	18-19 August	Andrew Gersbach andrew@dataflex.com.au 0414 690 204

Musher Profile – Scott Walker

Scott is an Australian-born Japanese resident and musher! Ed.

I was raised in Sydney.

I used to go for a week's holiday every year to Smiggings holes and I loved skiing only stopped 20mins for lunch as I only had a week per year.

I joined the volunteer ski patrol for 4 seasons in Perisher and skied in my free time.

In Nov 1990 I left to go to Europe where I taught skiing for 2 seasons and then worked as a lifeguard in Cornwall UK for 1 season.

I went home in 1993 in the middle of big recession and could not find any work at all. The last place I could get a working Holiday visa was Japan. I was 28 when I came. I taught English to start with in Sapporo and came out to Niseko, which is only 100km from Sapprro, every weekend in summer to go on the river and in winter to snowboard because it snows almost every day. Endless deep powder snow, perfect for snowboarding.

In autumn 1996 I decided to start my own rafting company in Niseko. I needed a winter business, to keep going through winter. The only alternatives at the time were ski and snowboard school but there were too many of them already, so I had to have something new. I had the idea of dog sledding. I didn't have any expertise in the area or any dogs, only a dream. I found a kind man to lend me his dogs. He ran dogs in races but his business was not going so well so could not run his dogs any more. I used his dogs for the first season. I found a place next to lift, a place that was not being used by any one. I paid the resort 20% of what I made in exchange for the place and had them grooming all that powder, to make a flat hard course. The course was only 500m long.

The experience included a lesson in sled handling, peddling. Then we pulled them on the sled behind a snowmobile. Finally we hooked 2-3 dogs up and of they went for a short but fun ride. All customers very happy.

I charged 1,800 yen which is about $18US. To supplement my income I took photos and sold them as well. I worked so hard and had no days off all winter. I ran a team of 4 dogs occasionally on a long course. I loved that the best, but found I was too tired to this very often.

The mass media come every year to film. I have been on TV countless amounts of times. I also offer snow rafting this is where I pull a small raft behind a snowmobile around the same course about 4 times. This is what kept the business and allowed me to show a small profit.

In the second season I bought my own dogs - about $1,000US per dog. I bought 9 Dogs. I also bought another snowmobile a 430HP Yamaha Enticer. A very very good snowmobile.

In the second season, due to the high cost of keeping dogs, I had to put the price up to 2,500 yen But this did not affect customer numbers. The second season was the best making a reasonable profit mainly due to snow rafting

In the 3rd seasonwe also made a reasonable profit.

Last season, the 4th season, was a complete disaster. The customer numbers in the resort was down by about 15% but SAS business was down by over 50%. Due in part to the recession, lack of employee enthusiasmn, the manager lacking any leadership skills and a very cold winter.

The resort this year has also decided to use my area themselves. As they say nothing is fair in love and war and business. I was paying them 20% on a business that was loosing money, they will operate snow rafting themselves.

So I have nowhere t
o operate my dog sled operation unless I find a place close to a lift with customers. There are only 2 places that are possibilities. Have not talked yet to the owners of the land but there is a good possibility that my dogs will live their days out as pets. Maybe that is the best thing. I do not know. I know it will be a sad day for Niseko to loose dog sledding.

Next year even if I find a place due to the deep powder if I cannot find a bulldozer I cannot make the snow hard enough to run the dogs so I will have a few barriers to come up against.

Postscript

Some good news, I think I have found a place to run my dogs next year. In a ski resort that will appreciate dog sledding.

The team will be reduced to 6 dogs from 11. The other dogs will be given away as pets. The reason is that it is much easier to manage, all round and not so expensive and I can exercise 6 dogs in the off season, 11 is too difficult.

Scott Walker and Husky Pup

Revised Southern Times

People who obtained the race results at the Southern Cross Pro Am will notice a change to the results posted in Hike! and in the Pointscore.

A timing error was noticed - which when rectified elevated Peter Komidar from 8th position to 5th place.

The results in Hike represent the true and correct version and have been used as the basis for pointscore calculations.

$$\frac{\sqrt{4}}{\sqrt{3}} = \frac{\sqrt{3}}{\sqrt{4}} \quad (39)$$

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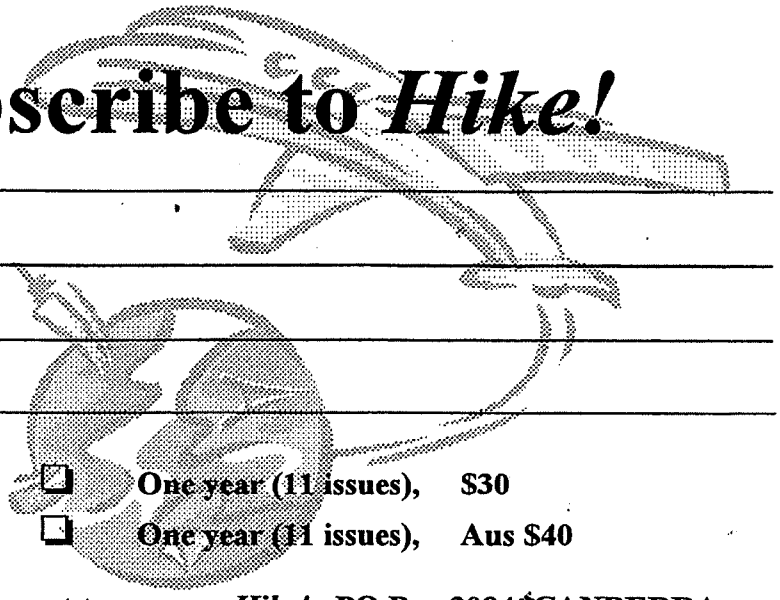

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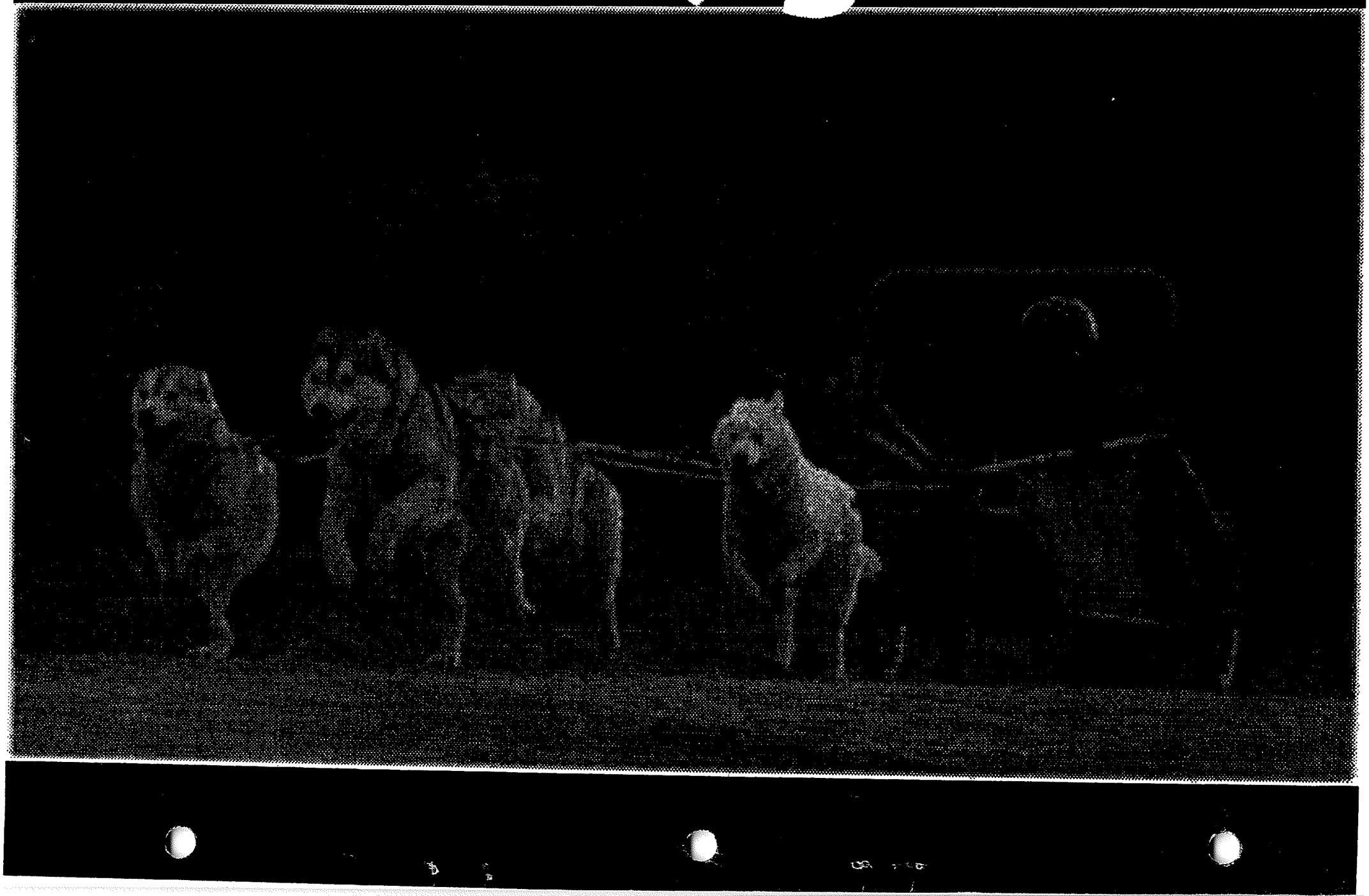
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